

By **STUART EARP** Wycombe Wanderers 4, R.A.F. 0

WYCOMBE Wanderers made light work of the appalling weather conditions at Loakes Park on Tuesday night to produce some entertaining football and run out deserved winners against the R.A.F.

There was a slight misunderstanding about the opponents for this friendly as Molesey were due to be the visitors. However, the Athenian League club stood down to allow the R.A.F., who had gathered their team together at Naphill from various stations all over the country, to play this game.

Wanderers fielded a strong side in the first half and it was in the first 45 minutes that the best football was played, probably due to the worsening conditions, with rain pelting down and a swirling wind making life very unpleasant, the Blues kept the sparse crowd happy with three goals before the break.

An extreme offside trap, when the R.A.F. back four raced up to almost half way, caught Wycombe several times early on but by stretching their game wide, they overcame this tactic well.

First goal was a beauty in the 23rd minute. Gavin Fraser made it with a beautiful pass between two defenders into the path of Howard Kennedy. Spurning the chance to shoot, he squared the ball back to the unmarked Pearson whose shot only just crossed the line as it rolled over the mud.

Wanderers made it 2-0 on the half hour with a fine goal from Kennedy. He was outside the box when he suddenly let fly with a powerful drive that surprised goalkeeper Thompson and skidded into the net.

With the pitch cutting up, Wycombe deserve full credit for some fine attacking moves while John Maskell at the other end was mainly concerned with keeping warm.

But the R.A.F. must count themselves a little unlucky to

have gone three down in the 36th minute for Wanderers' third goal was an absolute fluke! Peter Cruse crossed into the middle where Walton tried to thump the ball clear. Unfortunately his clearance struck Pearson's shin and the ball ricocheted into the net from eight yards. Ian could hardly believe his luck.

Seconds later Thompson saved at point blank range from Pearson and the Wycombe striker completed an eventful half but sending a penalty over the crossbar after John Priestley had been brought down by Ian Hornby. It was Pearson's first miss from the spot for Wycombe.

Four half time substitutions spoilt the flow of Wycombe's game in the second half as conditions deteriorated. Also, with three goals in the bag, some of the players became over confident.

Peter Spittle, substitute for Maskell, had a far busier half and produced good saves from Bedford and Oram. Fourth and final goal came in the 79th minute when Lance Cadogan, playing his second friendly for the Blues, headed the ball home at the far post following Pearson's corner.

Thompson produced two fine saves to foil Kennedy and Paul Birdseye in the last minute.

WYCOMBE: J. Maskell (sub. P. Spittle 45 mins.); P. Birdseye, K. Mead (sub. D. Bullock 45 mins.), A. Phillips, R. Davies; G. Fraser (sub. A. Horseman 45 mins.), J. Priestley, H. Kennedy; P. Cruse, H. Kettleborough (sub. D. Evans 45 mins.), I. Pearson.

R.A.F.: Thompson; Rajotte, Pooley, Corkish, Walton; Eves (sub. Thorne 68 mins.), Hornby, Brice (sub. Bedford 53 mins.); Oram, Tinsley, Pritchard.

Referee: J. Atkins (High Wycombe).

Half-time: 3-0. **Goalscorers:** Pearson 2 (23, 36), Kennedy (30), Cadogan (79).